524 defeat an average player (in the comparison, the Sao antelope)?
539 After all, just yesterday I defeated a totally inferior player (in the
578 comparison, the dwarf antelope)! That has given my father sufficient revenge for the time being (in the comparison, enough to eat).

We see a cornucopia of ridicule poured forth here. Magnificent comparisons! Pithy expressions! Negro poetry with an elemental force!

Game of Chance (abĭa, Jaunde, Bulu)

525 177 184 Like the stone game, the game of chance was not an indigenous cultural possession of the Pangwe. From the Maka (Makie in Jaunde) in the east through the mediation of the Mwogeniange kin group (probably Bene) on the upper Nyong it came to the core of the Bene, who transmitted it to the Jaunde and Bulu. In only the most recent times, the Ntum have become acquainted with it through Jaunde and Bene traders who came to them in the service of the Whites. Nonetheless, I myself have seen people engaged in this game only once, in 1907 in the vicinity of the northern Ntum region. Among the Fang the game is unknown.

525 The game of chance is played with small circular playing disks (sĭ; plural, besĭ, derived from esĭ "goods," because, according to the Pangwe, they decide whether the players are winning or losing and hence, as it were, bring in the money in the form of goods, trade items) which are simply cut out of calabash rinds (Fig. 117, a). Furthermore, the game requires counters (mvi[illegible] I), [531] [624] of which each player must bring his own. They are produced from the hard rinds of the fruit from a tree called abĭm by the Jaunde, and on their smooth upper surface (outerside of the fruit) they bear attractive patterns of various kinds, animal forms, or human figures, which, like the edge, are carved in relief (Fig. 117, b-d). /Fig. 117 appears here in the original text./ /316/

The number of players that can participate is unlimited, but there must be at least four.

To play (a dĭ abĭa), a basketry plate is also needed, into which are placed once and for all seven playing disks (seven again as a

525 lucky number). At the start of the game each of the players puts his counter in the basket with the disks. The leader of the game, who does not play himself, tosses the counters and disks into the air with the plate, catches them again, quickly turns the plate over and covers them up. If counters fall to the side, these must simply be pushed toward the edge of the basket -- they are valid. On the other hand, the throw does not count in case a counter is standing on edge, squeezed between others, when the basket is raised.

The question now is whether the counters are lying face up (carved side) or face down.

Then depending on whether the playing disks are lying face up (with the shiny side up) or face down, either face up or face down counters win.

The decision concerning winning or losing can be seen from the following combinations.

If all the counters are lying face up or all of them face down, the throw does not count and must be repeated. On the other hand, if all the counters do not have the same side up, then the winner or winners are:

with four players

if all the disks are lying face down or up to three disks inclusive are lying face up and

1 counter lies face up, the one counter lying face up.
2 counters lie face up, the two counters lying face up.
3 counters lie face up, the one counter lying face down.

if 4-7 disks lie face up and

1 counter lies face up, the one counter lying face up.
2 counters lie face up, the 2 counters lying face down.

[59]

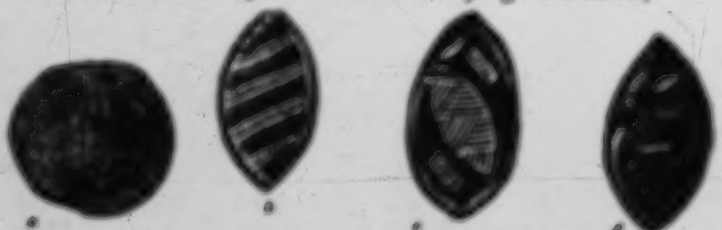

Fig. 117. (a) Playing Disk. (b)-(c) Counters for the Game of Chasse. Jaunde. Actual size.

3 counters lie face up, the one counter lying face down;

525

with five players

if all the disks lie face down or up to three disks inclusive lie face up and

1 counter lies face up, the one counter lying face up,
2 counters lie face up, the two counters lying face up,
3 counters lie face up, the three counters lying face up,
4 counters lie face up, the one counter lying face down; /317/

if four to seven disks lie face up and

1 counter lies face up, the one counter lying face up,
2 counters lie face up, the three counters lying face down,
3 counters lie face up, the two counters lying face down,
4 counters lie face up, the one counter lying face down.

Put in words, the matter may be expressed as follows.

1. In case all the disks are lying face down or up to three disks inclusive are lying face up, the team on the right loses only if the counters of all players less one (total minus one) are lying face up.

2. In case four to seven disks are lying face up, the team to the right always loses if more than one chip is lying face up.

Now it may also happen that four players cannot be assembled. In that case, three players help themselves out by putting down a blind counter for the missing fourth. If this counter alone comes out the winner, the throw naturally does not count; on the other hand, if it is the second winner, the share of the dummy falls to the co-winner.

The stakes must be fixed before the basketry plate is raised. Each player must place a certain fairly high value (for instance, 2, 5, or 10 marks), usually in the form of goods, on a pile, which the winners share equally. If there is only one winner, he gets the whole pile. The losses suffered by a Negro in the game are considerable. If he has no more money with him, he has his luckier friends give him an advance in the hope of winning at a later throw and paying back the loan. In this process some of them go so deeply in debt that in the end they must leave their wives with the creditor, and sometimes they come to blows, even to homicide; blood revenge

[426]
[518]

525 and wars have frequently been the consequences of the gambling
578 mania. Although in more recent times the game of chance has been prohibited in the area controlled by the German government, nonetheless considerable homage is paid the gambling demon in secret.

525 In order to insure luck at the game, a whole series of medi-
111 cines is made, which, according to the view already familiar to us, transfer the properties of plants to the counters; for in-
524 stance, plants which make them burning hot (Boehmeria, Urticaceae), sharp, peppery (Spilanthes, Compositae), and strong (Carpolobia, Polygalaceae). Others are intended to preserve for the owner the objects that he has put down as his stake in the game. In this category we find burrs (Desmodium) and winding Araceae. /318/ /Fig. 118 appears here in the original text./

5. Wrestling

526 Wrestling matches are very frequent, especially in the southern Pangwe region, both to settle personal quarrels -- in this case the defeated wrestler was formerly sometimes squeezed half to death and cases of death have even occured -- as well as for sport. In the latter case one might actually speak of a sports festival to which the drum summons young and old, man and woman, from afar. I shall dispense with a detailed description, however,

In wrestling, certain rules of the game are observed, for instance, that both wrestlers must be as nearly matched as possible, and this determines whether they turn down the challenge (a kɛ́n nɔ̀ŋ) or take it up (a mɔ̀ŋm nɔ̀ŋ).

Our picture (Fig. 119) represents a snapshot of such wrestlers (mɛ̀n I, from a sɔ́n = to wrestle). To the left one can see a group of young men waiting (a ɨ́kɔ́n) to be challenged (a kɔ́ŋ = to challenge). Before the match the wrestler rub dust onto the palms of his hands and his arms (a dɔ́k mɛ̀ŋ ɨ́k enɨ̀m = to rub dust [on the] arm) to make them less slippery.